

# INSPECTION REPORT

**SS MARY AND MICHAEL CATHOLIC  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Garstang, Lancashire

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119617

Headteacher: Mrs M Williamson

Lead inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 257541

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and Junior.
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	129
School address:	Castle Lane Garstang Preston Lancashire
Postcode:	PR3 1RB
Telephone number:	01995 603023
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Ibison
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in Barnacre-with-Bonds, a suburb on the outskirts of the Lancashire town of Garstang near Preston. The school gained a School Achievement Award from the government in 2002 in recognition of the standards it attained. There are 129 pupils on roll with a slightly higher number of girls than boys. The school is smaller in size than other primary schools. Most of the pupils live close to the school and there is no significant level of pupil mobility. The great majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin and there are no pupils whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs stands at approximately 17 per cent and this is broadly in line with the national average, although the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is higher than the national average at almost three per cent. The nature of special educational need covers speech and communication difficulties, physical and other learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is less than two per cent and this is well below the national average. Attainment when children start school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Martin Newell	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Inclusion Foundation Stage English Information and communication technology History Geography
31729	Bernard Harrington	Lay inspector	
22556	Eifion Morgan	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Personal, social, health education and citizenship

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. By the time that pupils leave school they attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science and in some foundation subjects. Teaching has many strengths although on occasions it is not always demanding enough for the higher attaining pupils. The pupils thoroughly enjoy school and behaviour is very good. The school is well led and managed and the headteacher has played a pivotal role in creating an effective ethos where learning is fun. The school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses.

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. Although many pupils in Years 1-6 achieve well, achievement for some higher attaining pupils, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2 could be better.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and in some foundation subjects by the time that pupils leave school.
- The school is well led and managed.
- Teaching and learning are good in many lessons.
- Writing standards are not as high as reading standards when pupils leave school.
- The use of assessment data is not as effective as it could be.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and pupils' behaviour are very good.
- The school provides a good and vibrant range of learning opportunities and provides very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school pays high regard to pupils' care, to pupils' views and opinions and nurtures their personal development very well.
- The school has established strong links with parents who do much to support children's learning.

The school has made good progress since the time of the last inspection. The school set about tackling the key issues in a rigorous manner despite the absences of key members of the staff. The strong commitment of staff to improving the quality of education has seen improvements in standards, the quality of teaching and the quality of learning opportunities. The school is now well placed to build on its many strengths.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	C	B
mathematics	A*	B	A	A
science	A	B	B	A

Key: A\* - very high; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage. Many pupils achieve **well** in Years 1-6, although the work that is set for the higher attaining pupils, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2, is not always challenging enough. The above table shows that pupils often attain

above and at times well above the national average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Only occasionally does attainment drop below this level. Fluctuations from year to year reflect the differing natural ability of the different groups of pupils. The school gained a School Achievement Award from the government in 2002 in recognition of its successes. The school performs well when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. Standards are also above national expectations in history, art and design and elements of music. Pupils generally achieve well in these subjects although on occasions work could be more demanding for the higher attaining pupils. Standards in all other subjects are at an average level.

Standards are at an average level overall by the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils achieve well but the older and higher attaining pupils in Year 2 could achieve higher standards, if work was consistently challenging. Standards in all other subjects are at a satisfactory level. Throughout the school, standards in writing are improving but are not as high as in reading. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning. Attainment when children start school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. The consistently good quality of teaching ensures that children get a good start to their educational lives and most children attain the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time that they start in Year 1. Throughout the school there is no significant evidence of differences in attainment between boys and girls.

The very good provision that the school makes for pupils with special educational needs ensures that pupils receive very good quality support and benefit from having good quality individual education plans. As a result pupils make good progress towards targets that are set for them and achieve well.

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and pupils are keen to take responsibility for their own learning and to contribute to the life of the school as a community. Pupils love coming to school and this is reflected in the attendance levels which are well above the national average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION.**

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall and are strongest in the Foundation Stage and for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 and for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Here teaching and learning are focused and challenging, lessons zip along at a good pace. For children in the Foundation Stage plenty of opportunities are provided for children to learn through practical, hands on activities as well as through the more formal teaching of specific skills. When teaching is not as effective it is because the expectations that are set in terms of achievement are not high enough. Throughout the school teaching assistants and nursery nurses make a powerful contribution to pupils' learning and achievements. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall with good procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. The school has accurately identified the need to make better and sharper use of the information for setting challenging targets for individual pupils and for differing groups of pupils. The school provides a good curriculum which is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors which help to bring learning to life. The school is a very caring school where the views of pupils are listened to and respected. Links with parents are very good and parents play a much valued and valuable role in supporting their child's learning. They add much to the sense of community that runs through the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher leads the school well and has a clear and accurate grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. Leadership in subjects such as English, mathematics, science and art and design are good and impact well on how pupils achieve and in helping to improve the quality of provision and teaching. Governors make an important contribution to the management of the school and governance is good.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very happy with the school and the quality of education that it provides. Parents feel that their children are well taught, achieve well and leave the school at the end of Year 6 as confident, well-rounded individuals who are well prepared for secondary education. A significant minority of parents would like the school's many successes to be more widely publicised and celebrated within the local community and beyond and the governing body is already examining ways in which this could be done.

The pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are very appreciative of all that the school provides. Pupils feel that their views and opinions are listened to and respected and are very confident that if they should have any concerns or worries they will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively by a member of the teaching or non-teaching staff.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Ensure that work and tasks that are set for the higher attaining pupils, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2, are consistently demanding and challenging.
- Continue to raise standards in writing so that they more closely align with reading standards.
- Make more effective and rigorous use of assessment data and information to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Closely scrutinise the factors when pupils do not reach their targets or indeed exceed them.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.**

Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage. Achievement is **good** for most pupils in Years 3-6. The younger pupils in Years 1-2 achieve **well** but achievement for the higher attaining Year 2 pupils is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and some foundation subjects by the time that pupils leave school.
- Although many pupils achieve well in Years 1-2, achievement for the higher attainers could be better.
- Writing standards are improving but they are not yet at the same level as reading standards when pupils leave school.

#### **Commentary**

##### **FOUNDATION STAGE**

1. The children make a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage. Children's attainment when they start school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. The good quality of learning experiences and teaching ensures that children of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. By the time that children are ready to start in Year 1 most have attained the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning.

##### **KEY STAGE 1**

2. On the basis of the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments in 2003 for Year 2 pupils, attainment was in line with the national average in writing and mathematics and below the national average in reading. When compared with similar schools attainment was below average in writing and mathematics and well below average in reading. Teacher assessments in science, putting attainment at well above average, appear a little generous when compared to other subjects. The trend in the school's rate of improvement is slightly below the national trend. Inspection findings show that attainment in English, mathematics and science is at an average level. The picture that emerges is that a high percentage of pupils are on track to attain the level expected of 7-year-olds in all three subjects. The average and less able pupils in Year 2 and the Year 1 pupils are achieving well. However, the tasks that are set for the higher attaining Year 2 pupils are not always as challenging and demanding as they could be to help them attain at a higher level. Attainment in all other inspected subjects is at an average level and achievement is satisfactory although pupils are currently achieving well in art and design.

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2- average points score in 2003.

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.0(16.2)	15.7(15.8)
Writing	14.8(15.3)	14.6(14.4)
Mathematics	16.8(17.9)	16.3(16.5)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

### KEY STAGE 2

3. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in mathematics, above the national average in science and in line with the national average in English. When compared to similar schools attainment was well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Attainment over time has occasionally been in the top 5% of schools nationally and the school gained a School Achievement Award in 2002 in recognition of its attainment levels. The school's trend of improvement has been a little below the national trend. Although the value added measure between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is better than the progress made by pupils nationally and better than that found in similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average and achievement is good overall, although it is at its strongest for the older pupils in school. Standards in writing are improving but still lag a little behind reading standards when pupils leave school. Attainment in art and design, history and elements of music are above average by the end of Year 6. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level. Any differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the natural ability differences in the groups of pupils and there is no significant evidence of differences in the achievement of boys and girls.

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6- average points score in 2003.

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4(29.8)	26.8(27.0)
Mathematics	28.7(28.2)	26.8(26.7)
Science	29.9(29.4)	28.6(28.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets set for them in their individual educational plans and pupils of all ages achieve well. These pupils benefit from the good support they receive from their teachers and in particular the classroom support assistants who make a significant contribution to how well pupils achieve.

### Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and attendance rates are **very good**. Behaviour is **very good**. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **very good**. Cultural development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of the teachers.
- The provision the school makes for pupils' personal development is very good.
- The behaviour of pupils, of all ages, during all types of activities is very good.
- Pupils carry out responsibilities in classes and throughout the school well.
- The excellent relationships that exist throughout the school contribute significantly to the absence of all forms of oppressive behaviour and to how well pupils achieve.
- The attendance rate for the last academic year was very high in comparison with other schools.

## Commentary

5. The pupils' very high rate of attendance has been maintained over a number of years and is a reflection of pupils' attitudes to school. Almost all absences are authorised and the registers show that pupils are punctual. The school promotes attendance well through newsletters and early contact with parents whose children are away from school.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	2.9
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.1
National data:	0.4

6. Relationships in school are excellent and this helps to create a most positive learning environment. Pupils of all ages, including those in the Foundation Stage, are enthusiastic learners and contributors to lessons and other activities and the very positive attitudes that pupils have to all that the school offers, impact significantly on how well they achieve. Pupils with special educational needs have equally good attitudes to learning. All pupils are fully involved in lessons and show no reluctance to participate. They work with a real sense of purpose. Pupils are very well behaved in class and around the school. They demonstrate a very good level of self-discipline, often managing their own activities such as reading whilst registration is under way. Pupils demonstrate very good social skills as they talk and play together. Recent exclusions have related to a single pupil and were undertaken when all other sanctions had been exhausted. Pupils readily take responsibility for tasks in class and around the school and carry them out with a high level of diligence and maturity.

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White - British
Mixed - any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Parent preferred not to say
Information not obtained

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
115	3	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0

7. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. Older pupils have a very good understanding of moral issues and of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils recognise the need for and the importance of reflection and enjoy celebrating the achievements of their classmates and often present assemblies of their own devising. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to raise their awareness of cultures other than their own by, for example, visiting mosques and synagogues. The emphasis that the school places on developing the self esteem of all pupils and of celebrating the individuality of pupils is rewarded by the confident and well-rounded individuals that leave the school, well prepared for secondary education.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good** but could be **improved further** through more challenge for some higher attaining pupils. The school provides a **good** range of learning opportunities. The care and welfare of pupils is **very good**. The links with and support of parents are **very good** and **good** links with the community are in place.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall although at times it is not challenging enough for the higher attaining pupils. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and for most pupils in Years 1-6.
- Teaching at times is not challenging enough for the higher attainers, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2.
- Teaching assistants make a powerful contribution to how well pupils learn.
- There is good use of specialist teaching in art and design.
- Good assessment procedures are in place in the core subjects but better use needs to be made of the information to set targets and track individual pupils' progress.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	15	7	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

8. Teaching and learning have improved since the time of the last inspection. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Teaching strikes a good balance where children can learn through practical, investigative activities where they are genuinely finding things out for themselves and lessons where they are directly taught key literacy, numeracy and other skills across the areas of learning. The teacher and nursery nurse work very well together and ensure that tasks that are set are stimulating and challenging and meet the individual needs of the children. Good assessment procedures are in place. Assessment data that is collated soon after children start school is used well to identify children with special educational needs and also to plan

work that closely matches the needs of the higher attaining children. On-going assessments are also used well to guide and inform lesson planning. In doing so they play an important role in ensuring that all children make good progress and achieve well.

9. The quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science is generally good but there is still room for further improvement. Reading skills are being taught well because pupils are being equipped with the necessary strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases and then to develop higher reading skills such as skimming and scanning as they get older. The skills necessary to write for specific purposes and opportunities to write in different subjects of the curriculum are becoming more embedded in school practice. However, these strategies have not yet had sufficient time to have their biggest possible impact on further raising standards. Teaching places a good emphasis on practical and investigative tasks in mathematics and science and is at its best when pupils are expected to put their knowledge to the test when solving mathematical problems or in initiating investigations and using their knowledge to make informed predictions or hypotheses. Teaching is at its best in these subjects when tasks and activities match the individual needs of the pupils and really stretch the higher attaining pupils. On these occasions the pupils are kept interested and highly motivated throughout the lesson, are keen to find out more and learning is greatly accelerated. There are times however, particularly, but not only for Year 2 pupils, when tasks are just too easy and not enough is expected of the higher attaining pupils. This prevents achievement from being even stronger.
10. Teaching in information and communication technology is currently good and at times very good. This is because skills in the different strands of the subject are being taught in a direct and systematic manner. Teachers are increasingly using computers to enhance pupils' learning in most other areas of the curriculum. Good use is being made of the individual skills of teachers in subjects such as art and design. Here the co-ordinator teaches the subject well and with great gusto and enthusiasm to different classes across the school. This is having a positive impact on standards and how well pupils achieve. Plans are in hand for the music co-ordinator to use his good subject knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm in a similar manner so that pupils other than those in his class will benefit from good quality teaching, learning and fun musical experiences. Teaching is good in subjects such as history when the teachers' subject knowledge helps to bring the subject to life and where pupils are provided with opportunities to act as historical enquirers.
11. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching and the very good support they receive from classroom support assistants who make a powerful contribution to how well pupils achieve. Tasks are carefully planned and well matched to the pupils' ability and prior learning. Planning is based on the targets identified in pupils' individual educational plans and targets are sufficiently practical to enable progress to be effectively monitored. Classroom support assistants are fully involved in planning the work and provide a very good blend of help and challenge so pupils do not become over-dependent on them. Brief periods of withdrawal enable pupils to receive specific help when necessary. All pupils are treated with respect and their contributions valued and encouraged.
12. Assessment overall is satisfactory. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, for pupils with special educational needs and for children in the Foundation Stage. Satisfactory procedures are in place overall in the foundation subjects. Good use is made of the data collated in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs to set targets and to guide and inform

planning. The school has accurately identified the need to make more rigorous and systematic use of assessment data in all other subjects to set challenging targets for individual pupils and for small groups of pupils and then to carefully track and evaluate pupils' progress towards the set targets.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provision is **good**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The formal curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and is enhanced by a good range of learning opportunities outside of the formal curriculum.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Opportunities to enhance pupils' writing skills in different subjects are not capitalised on enough.
- The school's accommodation is spacious and attractive and resources are good.

## **Commentary**

13. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection. Opportunities to enhance pupils' writing skills across different subjects of the curriculum are not yet consistent enough. In contrast, pupils' numeracy skills are enhanced well in different subjects such as geography and science. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well embedded in school practice and have played an important role in helping to raise standards. Provision in other curriculum areas such as science, art and design and history is good and there is a good emphasis on pupils investigating, exploring, experimenting and finding things out for themselves alongside the direct teaching of specific skills and knowledge.
14. The curriculum offered to children in the Foundation Stage is good because it meets the needs of young children well. It offers children the chance to achieve well through well-planned and structured activities which strike a good balance between practical, hands on learning experiences and the direct teaching of key skills. Learning is made fun.
15. The school provides well for the enrichment of the curriculum through a good range of visits out of school and visitors to school which enhance pupils' learning in subjects such as art and design, history, music and science. Such experiences help to bring learning to life. Good use is also made of the school's grounds and the local community as learning resources. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities promoting pupils' participation in sport, the arts and other interests for pupils of different ages including the younger pupils in school. These activities also add another dimension to pupils' personal development.
16. A formal programme for developing pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship has only recently been implemented and has yet to be firmly established in the curriculum. However, the excellent relationships evident in the school have ensured that pupils' personal and social development is very good. The science curriculum incorporates the required aspects of health education. A strong community spirit is evident in the school and pupils are well aware of citizenship as was evident in discussion with pupils.

17. The school makes very good arrangements for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified at an early age and support systems put in place immediately. These pupils play a full and active part in all school activities including extra curricular activities. Pupils' individual education plans are well matched to their needs and used effectively by teachers in their planning. Learning support assistants are actively involved in assessing and tracking pupils' progress and make a significant and valuable contribution to how well these pupils achieve. The special educational needs register is well managed, provides good information about pupils and the progress they make. The school makes satisfactory provision for the higher attaining pupils. Whilst there are good examples where the needs of these pupils are fully met, there are occasions when the work that is set is simply not challenging enough.
18. The school is an attractive learning environment enhanced by good displays of pupils' work. The accommodation is spacious and well maintained and the school benefits from an outside wild life area and extensive playing fields. The school is well resourced to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resource deficiencies noted at the previous inspection have been fully addressed. The school makes good use of the talents of individual teachers in subjects such as art and design to help raise standards and the quality of curriculum provision.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school is a safe and healthy place for all pupils. Pupils are **very well** cared for and are provided with **good** support and guidance. Pupils are provided with **good** opportunities to become involved in the work of the school, these are increasing.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is a secure environment where the staff know pupils well.
- Child protection procedures are very effective.
- Induction arrangements are very good.
- Risk assessments are carried out regularly to ensure the safety of everyone on site.
- There are comprehensive first-aid routines in place.

### **Commentary**

19. The school is a very caring and supportive place where the welfare and well being of all pupils is given a high priority. Both the deputy headteacher and the headteacher ensure that any issues of Child Protection are dealt with well and with great sensitivity. The headteacher ensures, through an annual review of child protection procedures, that all teaching and non-teaching staff are kept well informed and conversant with the necessary procedures.
20. Outcomes from risk assessments, conducted twice a year, are reported to the governing body and if appropriate they are included in the school development plan. Health and safety is an agenda item at all staff meetings. Eight members of staff have received training in first-aid and the procedures for dealing with any minor injuries are followed meticulously by staff.
21. The school has clear procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs at an early stage and for monitoring their progress. Throughout the school, pupils have excellent and trusting relationships with teachers and other adults in the school and feel very confident in approaching adults should they have any concerns or worries. The school makes very good use of external support agencies for support, advice and

guidance. This makes an important contribution to ensuring and maintaining high levels of care, welfare and support for all pupils.

22. Routine checks by the headteacher, with all staff, provide opportunities for the monitoring of any incidence of bullying or oppressive or unacceptable behaviour. Discussions with many pupils during the inspection show that the concerns of a small number of parents regarding bullying have proved unfounded.
23. The school has very good induction arrangements with the pre-school group that meets in an adjacent building and with the toddler group that meets in the school hall. This helps to ensure that children's transition into full-time education is calm and stress free. Members of staff have recently received training in organising a School Council which is planned to be introduced in the near future. During lessons, in circle time, at assemblies and through small group discussions, the views of pupils are sought on a wide range of issues and evidence clearly shows that pupils' views are listened to, respected and valued and because of this pupils are able to make an important contribution to the life of the school as a community.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has **very good** links with parents. There are **good** links with the community and other primary schools.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are most appreciative of the quality of education that the school provides
- Parents find the school to be very approachable.
- Information provided to parents is good and children's progress reports are detailed and informative.
- Good links with the local community and other schools enrich the curriculum.
- A significant minority of parents would like the school's successes to be more widely publicised and celebrated within the local community and beyond.

### **Commentary**

24. The school's relationship with parents adds much to the ethos of the school. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school and are most appreciative of the quality of education that the school provides which was reflected in the very positive parental survey. Parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning by supporting and encouraging them in the work that they do at home. Several parents and friends help in school on a regular basis and many parents are willing to help on school trips and similar activities. The school association involves the community in school life by running fun nights based on the games that have been designed and made by pupils, organising trips to pantomimes, holding barbecues and dances, and by arranging shopping trips for parents.
25. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Parents find staff at the school very approachable. Parents indicate that they would not hesitate in contacting the school with any concerns, knowing that they would be dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively. Parents are provided with good quality information about events and happenings in school through regular and well presented letters and newsletters. Pupils' progress reports are detailed and informative and provide a clear picture of pupil's successes and what they need to do to improve. The school has good arrangements for providing information to parents of pupils with special educational

needs. Parents are informed initially of concerns the school may have about pupils' educational needs. Where these concerns require pupils to have individual educational plans, parents are involved in the regular reviews. Older pupils are actively involved in these reviews.

26. The school has established good links with the local community. Visitors as well as an extensive range of visits have all contributed to enhancing pupils' learning experiences. They also impact positively on pupils' social development. A significant minority of parents feel that the school does not publicise its successes well enough within the local community and beyond. Inspection evidence supports parents' perceptions and the governing body has already set up a working party to address the issue. The school has good links with other schools and colleges. There are good quality academic and staff training links with other primary schools in the town and the school takes part in sporting events with other schools. These activities all add to pupils' educational experiences. Because of the diversity of the high schools to which pupils transfer, transitional arrangements vary from school to school but are never less than satisfactory. The school regularly welcomes teachers in training to undertake practical training in school. These arrangements provide additional learning experiences for pupils as well as the trainees.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher has a **very good** grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. Other key staff make a **good** contribution to the management of the school. Governance of the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads and manages the school well.
- Key members of staff have played an important role in helping to move the school forward.
- Governance of the school is good.
- Teaching and learning are monitored well.
- Not enough rigorous use is made of test and assessment data for target setting and tracking pupils' progress.
- Financial planning is good.

### **Commentary**

27. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She has a very good and astute grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. She has put in place effective strategies for tackling identified issues successfully. The headteacher is open, frank and honest and recognises that there is still scope for further improvement. However, her continued commitment to raising standards has been a major factor in the good progress that the school has made since the time of the last inspection. Her understated and modest leadership style has proved most effective in improving the all round quality of education the school provides. It has gained her the respect of staff, pupils, governors and parents alike.
28. Due to staff absences over the last three years the roles of curriculum co-ordinators have had to be shared between a small number of teaching staff in a school where teachers already carry a heavy load of responsibilities for different subjects and other aspects of school life. They have responded to the challenge very well. They have

proved successful in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations and the monitoring of pupils' work and helping to raise standards. A strong team spirit has been built up amongst all who work at the school. All are committed to moving the school forward, to providing the best that they can for all pupils and in creating an ethos where the individuality of pupils is recognised.

29. The headteacher, together with some subject co-ordinators, carries out analyses of test and assessment data, but effective use is not fully made of this data in setting targets for individual pupils and closely monitoring their progress towards stated targets. Procedures are not yet firmly in place for evaluating why some pupils have not reached their intended targets or for disseminating any good practice if pupils have attained beyond their targets. The school is aware of these issues.
30. The Foundation Stage is managed well and ensures that the provision is geared towards meeting the needs of young children. Because of this children of all abilities get off to a good start in their educational lives. Good induction procedures and links with parents help to establish a strong partnership with parents which is built on and developed the longer children attend the school. Provision for special educational needs has been well managed. In the absence of the co-ordinator, the responsibility has been taken over by the headteacher. The documentation is detailed and extensive and each pupil's needs and progress is very well documented. This has made an important contribution to how well pupils achieve. Grants received to support learning for pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately and the school is well resourced to support the teaching and learning.
31. Governance of the school is good. The governing body carries out its duties in an effective manner. Governors make a good contribution to the leadership of the school and its success. Governors are fully involved in strategic planning, formulating and implementing policies and in target setting. The partnership between the governors and the school is very good whilst at the same time the governing body's role as "critical friend" is carried out openly and frankly. Governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development and support the work of the school in a highly committed manner, through both formal and informal visits to the school, through putting their professional skills to good use for the benefit of the school and through their continued support and presence at many of the school's social and fund raising events.
32. The school makes good use of the available finances. Good procedures are in place for monitoring spending. The day-to-day management of finances, carried out by the school secretary, is very good. The governors are provided with good financial information which helps them to make well-informed spending decisions. The governors and the headteacher are very aware of the need to evaluate the cost effectiveness of major spending decisions. For instance the impact the cost of additional computers and interactive whiteboards, will have on the quality of teaching and learning. Financial management overall is good because the school constantly seeks to ensure that it gets the best possible value from any goods or services purchased. Any additional funding is used very well to support a range of educational priorities identified in the school development plan. Taking all factors into account this is a school that is providing good value for money.

### Financial Information for the Year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	400 854	Balance brought forward from the previous year	32 492
Total expenditure	385 516	Balance carried forward to the next	47 830
Expenditure per pupil	2 715		

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

33. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and has improved well since the time of the last inspection. When children start at the school attainment covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. The consistently good quality of teaching that children benefit from in the reception class enables children of all abilities to achieve well and to get a good start to their educational lives. By the time that children are ready to start in Year 1 most attain the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning.
34. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good because they recognise how young children learn and ensure that the quality of provision is constantly reviewed to meet their needs. Very good induction procedures are in place with the local pre-school provision which helps to ensure a smooth transition for children into full-time education. Equally good procedures are in place for informing parents about their child's start at the school. Staff in the Foundation Stage are very approachable and this helps to lay the foundations for a strong and effective partnership between school and home. Parents are very supportive of their child's education and are always willing to play their part in supporting the work of the school and enhancing their child's education.
35. Good procedures are in place for assessing children's attainment soon after they start school. This information is used well to identify from an early age children with special educational needs. It is also used well to guide and inform planning so that work is closely matched to the individual needs of children. Good on-going assessment procedures carried out both by the teacher and nursery nurse ensure that children's progress and achievements are regularly reviewed and parents kept well informed. Accommodation is satisfactory.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are of a high standard.
- Adults set high expectations and provide very good role models.
- The ethos for learning encourages positive attitudes to learning.

### **Commentary**

36. The good quality of teaching and learning ensures that all children achieve well and that many attain the early learning goals by the time that they start in Year 1. Adults recognise the individuality of all children. Children are made to feel welcomed and valued each day on arrival and this helps them to quickly settle into class routines. Teaching makes clear the expectations in terms of behaviour and work. This is done in a firm but sensitive manner. As a result children want to please and are eager to start on the wide array of learning activities that have been prepared for them. Staff provide

very good role models in terms of respect and courtesy and the children soon learn to appreciate that these are important features of life in the reception class. Staff expect children to dress themselves and to show appropriate manners when asking for or receiving things. Expectations are high in relation to children taking responsibility for putting away resources and sharing things. The warmth of relationships and the recognition of children's successes and support when things do not go to plan play an important role in developing children's self esteem. The positive attitudes that staff encourage at every opportunity help children to develop a good sense of right and wrong. The children are secure in the knowledge that good work, actions or behaviour will be acknowledged.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Early reading and writing skills are taught well.
- A good emphasis is placed on the development of children's awareness of letter sounds.
- Opportunities are seized upon to further children's communication skills
- Occasionally children do not listen as attentively as they could.

#### **Commentary**

37. The quality of teaching and learning are good. Teaching is very effective at ensuring that tasks that are set are very carefully matched to the individual abilities of children. Early reading and writing skills are taught well. This helps to ensure that all children achieve well and most are on track to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Opportunities are capitalised on to enhance children's speaking skills when they are taking part in painting, baking or when playing in sand or water. Teaching constantly encourages children to answer in sentences and to expand their vocabulary. As a result speaking standards improve. On occasions a small number of children do not listen attentively and interrupt the contributions of others. Staff tackle this well by reminding children of the need to respect others. Children love listening to stories. The way that the teacher reads the story captures the interest and imagination of the children who are then desperate to predict what happens next and are usually successful. By the end of the reception year children handle books well, have acquired early reading skills, know many letter sounds and names and the higher attaining children are starting to write independently.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Work is well matched to the individual needs of the children.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to learn through a stimulating range of practical, investigative activities.
- Mathematical vocabulary is developed well.

## Commentary

38. The good quality of teaching and learning are significant factors that enable children to achieve well. By the time that they start in Year 1 many children will have achieved the early learning goals. Children have a good knowledge of the names of both two and three-dimensional shapes and good teaching insists that children use a precise and accurate vocabulary. Children are directly taught numeracy skills and mathematical concepts which are then reinforced through a range of well planned practical and investigative activities. These are challenging and demanding but also great fun and capture and keep the interest of the children for prolonged periods of time. Children count to ten and many go beyond this with most children understanding "more than" and "less than" and the higher attainers carrying out simple addition sums. Good attention is paid to ensuring that the needs of individual children are met. The fact that children's work and responses are regularly assessed and recorded means that new work builds well on previous learning.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a good range of learning opportunities.
- The school makes good use of the local environment.
- Good use is made of computers.

## Commentary

39. Children of all abilities achieve well and most attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. This owes much to the good quality of teaching and learning. Teaching capitalises well on children's natural curiosity to find out about the world in which they live. The children take home, in turns, the class teddy who then experiences many different adventures and trips. The parents fully enter into the spirit of the occasion and send back both written accounts and photographic evidence which help to give children a wider perspective of the world around them. Teaching ensures that children learn through lots of practical activities. Through these activities they learn well that different materials take longer to dry than others, that the wind helps washing to dry and that air makes a balloon rise. Walks in the local environment give children a satisfactory awareness of different buildings and landmarks in the area and that where they live may be very different from other parts of the world. Good use is made of computers to support children's learning and children operate computers and listening stations in a satisfactory manner. Discussions about feelings and happenings in their lives and the lives of people from different cultures fosters a good early awareness of the importance of care and respect for others.

## Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned indoor and outside activities enhance children's physical development.
- Teaching capitalises on opportunities to enhance communication and mathematical skills.

## Commentary

40. The good teaching and good range of learning opportunities help to ensure that children achieve well. Most are on track to achieve the early learning goals by the time that they are ready to start in Year 1. In formal physical education lessons the children are kept physically active and move around the hall showing a good awareness of space and the needs of others. Children show satisfactory balance and poise and respond to instructions in an appropriate manner. Opportunities are capitalised on well in these situations to reinforce the importance of listening to and following instructions. They also reinforce counting skills when, for example, giving out and collecting in hoops. Although relatively small, the outdoor play area is being used well to enhance children's physical development through well-structured play activities using large wheeled and other toys. The direct teaching of the skills such as cutting and joining means that children use scissors and other small tools in a satisfactory and safe manner.

## Creative development

The provision in creative development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with good opportunities to use and extend their imagination in art and music activities.
- Work is acknowledged and celebrated through good quality displays.

## Commentary

41. Children really enjoy this aspect of their work because of the exciting opportunities offered to them in lessons where teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well and attain the early learning goals by the time that they start in Year 1. Staff develop singing through short songs, which enable children to sing in tune, clap to the rhythm and make appropriate hand and body movements. In art children have learned good control of their paint brushes, so that strokes are strong and firm. Teaching encourages children to experiment with colour when making hats. Children are only too ready to do this, so that hats are not uniformly the same. Teachers further broaden children's creative skills by encouraging them in the production of computer-generated art which is of a satisfactory standard. Good quality display is enhanced by children's work. This develops their esteem as they celebrate their own work and the achievements of others.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many pupils achieve well, although some higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 2, could achieve better.
- Standards are above average by the time that pupils leave school, although there is scope for improvement in writing standards.

- Reading skills are well taught.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Assessment procedures are good but better use could be made of the information for target setting and tracking pupils' progress.

## Commentary

42. On the basis of the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils in 2003 attainment in writing was in line with the national average and below the national average in reading. When compared to similar schools attainment was below average in writing and well below average in reading. Inspection findings show that standards are at an average level overall but with a higher level of challenge and expectation in writing for the higher attaining pupils in Year 2, standards could be higher. For these pupils achievement is only satisfactory. Achievement for the other pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be in line with the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show standards to be above average. Although writing standards are improving they are not at the same level as reading and speaking and listening skills. Although on occasions more demands and challenges could be made of the younger, higher attaining pupils at this key stage, achievement overall is good. Improvement has been good since the last inspection because standards and the quality of teaching and learning have improved.
43. Throughout the school, teachers place a good emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. From an early age pupils are attentive listeners in individual, small group and class discussions. In different subjects pupils use a satisfactory technical vocabulary and by the end of Year 2 standards are at an average level. This is built on well as pupils move through the school so that by the time that pupils leave school standards are above average. Pupils are confident speakers who justify their views and opinions well and who always show good levels of attentiveness and respect when listening to others.
44. Standards in reading are at an average level by the end of Year 2 which shows a good improvement from the test results of 2003. The more systematic manner in which pupils are taught a range of different strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and use these strategies across the curriculum is paying dividends. It is helping pupils to become more fluent and expressive readers. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average with many pupils leaving the school as expressive and confident readers who can use skills such as skimming and scanning to locate information quickly. Throughout the school, the continued commitment to purchasing good quality and quantity of reading resources has a positive impact on heightening pupils' interest in literature.
45. Standards in writing are at an average level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are improving due to the emphasis that the school has placed on the direct teaching of specific writing skills for different purposes, the provision of writing frames and structures. In addition the increasing opportunities that are planned for writing across the curriculum are having a positive influence. These initiatives have not yet been in place long enough to have their biggest possible impact on standards. Other areas for improvement include a higher expectation of what higher attaining pupils can achieve in writing, particularly in Year 2, and for the older pupils to write extended pieces of writing. At present writing does not always hook and then maintain the attention of the reader or fizzles out after a lively and imaginative start.

46. Teaching and learning are good for most pupils in school. Lessons are well planned and often zip along at a good pace. Pupils are made well aware of what is to be learnt in lessons and the good choice of texts for lessons often captures the interest and imagination of pupils. A good emphasis is placed on the development of phonic skills and reading skills are increasingly being taught well. In the best lessons, for example for the older pupils in Key Stage 2 and the younger pupils at Key Stage 1, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils, work is challenging and interesting and takes full account of previous learning. In contrast some teaching does not consistently set high enough expectations for some higher attaining pupils and consequently these pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Very good support is provided by the teaching assistants who make a significant contribution to how well pupils with special educational needs achieve.
47. Assessment procedures are good and provide a good indicator of the pupils' levels of attainment. The marking of pupils' work is often good with pointers for improvement clearly outlined. Where teachers carry out lesson evaluations it enables them to identify the next steps in learning and to assess where extra help or more challenging work is needed. Test and assessment data is not used effectively enough to set targets for individuals and small groups of pupils. Nor is it systematically used to regularly monitor, evaluate and review pupils' progress towards these targets.
48. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and has a very good grasp of the strengths of the subject and the areas that need to be tackled to further improve standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning has been carried out on a regular basis through lesson observations and scrutinies of pupils' work and teachers' planning. This has contributed much to improvements in standards and teaching although the co-ordinator recognises that there is still scope for further improvement.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

49. The promotion of pupils' language and literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively, to use a good technical vocabulary and to read aloud or carry out research in different subjects of the curriculum. Although there are some good examples of writing skills being developed and enhanced in different subjects there are still some missed opportunities. Pupils often present their work well within literacy lessons but such presentational skills are not always carried over into other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses.**

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils in Years 3-6 and the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve well.
- Teaching meets the needs of pupils in Years 3-6 and for some pupils in Years 1 and 2 well.
- The work that is set for the higher attaining pupils, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2, is not consistently challenging enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve well.

- Assessment procedures are good but the information gained could be better used for target setting.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

## Commentary

50. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils' attainment was in line with the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. Tests for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be well above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards in mathematics are average in Year 2 and achievement is satisfactory overall but good for the younger pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. Most pupils will attain the level expected of 7-year-olds by the end of Year 2. However, the indications are that few will attain the next higher level because teaching and learning are not consistently challenging enough for the higher attaining pupils. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above national expectations and achievement in Years 3-6 is generally good although occasionally work is not challenging enough for the younger higher attainers. Any differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by pupils' natural ability differences and there is no significant evidence of differing achievement between boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good with improvements in standards by the time that pupils leave school and better quality teaching and learning.
51. Pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory number skills and good mental agility skills. They have a secure understanding of place value and most pupils apply their number skills well when solving simple arithmetical problems. They are less confident when confronted with more complex problems or those presented in different formats. Pupils name familiar two and three-dimensional shapes and the more able pupils know their basic properties. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in number work and most of the Year 6 pupils have good mental strategies when solving problems. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge of geometric shapes and their properties. Many pupils are familiar with the concept of probability and suggest the likelihood of familiar events occurring. The pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics in a range of more challenging tasks remains less secure.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good but could be better for some higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 2. Lessons are well planned and most proceed at a good pace. Pupils work hard and have very good attitudes to learning because most teachers have high expectations of achievement, behaviour and application. Teachers use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding and pupils are eager to tackle the tasks. Good examples of computers and interactive whiteboards being used to support and enhance pupils' learning were observed during the inspection and the school is keen to develop this good practice across the school so that it quickly becomes an integral part of learning in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in lessons and are presented with tasks that challenge them but are not too difficult to succeed. Teaching assistants make a powerful contribution to how well these pupils achieve. The work that is set for the higher attaining pupils, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2, is on occasions over consolidated rather than pushing on pupils' learning. On other occasions the work that is set is too easy. These aspects prevent pupils from reaching higher levels of attainment. Assessment procedures are good and well established. However the information gained is not used sharply or rigorously enough to set targets for individual or small groups of pupils. The reasons why pupils have not hit or indeed have exceeded the targets are not scrutinised.

53. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The recently appointed co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, is committed to raising standards and has a good grasp of exactly what is needed to improve provision in the subject. Teaching and learning are monitored well through lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum.**

54. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is good. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in subjects such as geography, science and design and technology. Here pupils plot co-ordinates, measure and record experimental results and measure and draw accurately.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average by the time that pupils leave school and most pupils in Years 3-6 and some pupils in Years 1-2 achieve well.
- Teaching helps pupils develop their investigative skills well.
- Tasks are not consistently challenging for the more able pupils and in particular the older pupils in Year 2.
- Good assessment procedures are in place but better use needs to be made of the information for target setting and tracking pupils' progress.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

#### **Commentary**

55. On the basis of teacher assessments in science in 2003 for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average. These assessments appear a little generous given the levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics which were at a much lower level. On the basis of National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003 attainment was above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards in science are average in Year 2. Most pupils are likely to attain the level expected of 7-year-olds. The younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. However, only a few pupils are on track to achieve the next higher level because the older and more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by work that is closely matched to their ability. Achievement is therefore only satisfactory overall in this key stage. Standards of attainment in Year 6 are above national expectations and most pupils in Years 3-6 achieve well, particularly the older pupils in school. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because of better teaching and standards.
56. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are provided with many opportunities to learn through practical and investigative activities as well as the systematic acquisition of scientific knowledge. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of simple factors that might influence fair testing and a satisfactory knowledge of life processes and living things, requirements for growth and electricity. However, the higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough to put their scientific knowledge to the test in more demanding and challenging practical activities. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average and most pupils

achieve well. All pupils, and in particular those in the Year 5 and 6 class, have very good attitudes to learning and their commitment to the work ensures that they make good progress. By the time that they leave school pupils have developed a good scientific knowledge across the different aspects of the subject. A notable feature of the work in Years 3-6 is the emphasis given to investigative work and pupils develop a good understanding of the concept of fair testing. Year 6 pupils have a good scientific vocabulary. In discussion these pupils displayed a good understanding of scientific principles and the application of science to everyday life, such as environmental issues. However in some classes pupils' ability to record their work is impaired by less than satisfactory presentation skills.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Questions are well used to reinforce previous knowledge. Teachers' knowledge of science enables them to respond effectively to pupils' questions. The very good inter personal relationships evident in classrooms means that pupils are sufficiently confident to ask questions of their teachers and to seek help. The best teaching is characterised by lessons that zip along at a good pace, expect pupils to set up their own investigations, discover scientific principles for themselves or for the younger pupils to use their knowledge to make informed predictions. Strong teaching also sets high expectations, particularly for the higher attainers. When teaching is not at this level it is because investigative tasks are the same for all abilities of pupils rather than tasks which push out the learning boundaries and sense of enquiry for the higher attaining pupils. There is little doubt that throughout the school pupils thoroughly enjoy their investigative work, show a desire to find things out for themselves and co-operate well in small groups.
58. Leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject. Good assessment procedures are in place and records of pupils' work kept for reference. The results of assessments are used to inform planning but are not used rigorously enough to ensure work is matched to the different age and ability of pupils and to set individual pupil targets. The teaching is being monitored and this needs to continue so as to ensure greater consistency across the school particularly in pupils' written work and presentation.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving and pupils achieve well.
- Specific key computer skills are being taught in a direct manner.
- The school's commitment to further improvement of provision and resources is high but at present regular access to enough computers hinders progress.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

59. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are improving at a good rate. Pupils of all abilities are currently achieving well because key computer skills are currently being taught in a direct and systematic manner. The school is increasing the number of interactive whiteboards it has, as these are proving to be a very visual and effective teaching tool. Although skills are being taught well the fact that the school does not have a computer suite or a high enough number of laptop

computers means that all pupils cannot put a newly learnt skill to the test because of the lack of immediate access to a sufficient number of computers in the classroom. Teachers get around this by devising innovative supplementary pencil and paper exercises linked to the teaching point whilst a small number of pupils work on computers. The situation is not ideal and progress could be better. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

60. By the end of Year 2 pupils change font sizes and colour and know how to save and send work to the printer. The higher attaining pupils show good mouse control and use paint programs well to produce imaginative and creative designs and pictures. Pupils use a satisfactory technical vocabulary and have a secure understanding of writing simple programs when using a programmable toy. Pupils are less aware of the use of computers in the wider world. By the time that pupils leave school they are confident at word processing, have good data handling skills and show a good ability to input data into spreadsheets. The use of data logging, digital cameras and microscopes give them a good insight into the wider uses of technology. Discussions with pupils suggest that the use and potential of electronic mail and the use of sensors and graphical modelling are less well developed.
61. Teaching and learning are currently good. Teachers have undertaken a good deal of in-service training and this has led to improvements in their confidence and expertise. It also means that they can deal with any minor technical problems without losing too much teaching time. Good use is made of teaching assistants who often have good subject knowledge. They are effective in helping pupils working on computers or completing associated pencil and paper exercises. Good use is made of the available interactive whiteboards which makes learning more attractive and immediately captures the interest of the pupils. The higher attaining pupils are usually given more exacting tasks that are more closely aligned with their ability and this helps to ensure that their motivational levels are kept high throughout the lesson.
62. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge. Good procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and learning across the school and a levelled portfolio of pupils' work is in place which provides a good source of reference when assessing pupils' work. Satisfactory procedures are in place for tracking pupils' progress in the subject.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

63. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory. Examples were observed of computers being used well for research purposes in subjects such as history. They are used well to support and enhance pupils' learning in mathematics and word processing skills in English. The school has accurately identified the need to ensure that this good practice is consistent across the school and for more use to be made of computers in the foundation subjects.

### **HUMANITIES**

64. Work was sampled in **geography** although insufficient teaching was observed to make a firm judgement about the overall quality of provision. There is nothing to indicate that standards are not at an average level. Discussions with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning indicate that over the course of the year pupils are taught all elements of the subject. There is a satisfactory emphasis given to the development of pupils' mapping skills as well as acquiring a secure base of geographical knowledge.

Pupils enjoy the subject and have a natural curiosity to find out about different places in the world and compare and contrast them to their own locality. The school is seeking to further enhance pupils' learning experiences by taking pupils on more field trips.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the time that pupils leave school.
- Teaching places a good emphasis on pupils finding things out for themselves.
- A good range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' learning.

### Commentary

65. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and are above average by the end of Year 6. For pupils in Years 1 and 2 achievement is satisfactory and good for pupils in Years 3-6. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Year 2 pupils show a satisfactory sense of chronology, compare items from the past to those of the present in a satisfactory manner and have a satisfactory recall of topics that they have studied recently such as the Egyptians but have a more patchy recall of previously studied periods of history. Progress accelerates in Years 3-6 and by the time that pupils leave school they have a good base of historical knowledge about the Greeks, Egyptians, Tudors, Romans, and The Vikings. Pupils know and understand the importance of primary and secondary sources of evidence and understand that different people may interpret the same period of history differently.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 with some good practice in Years 3-6. Where teaching is most successful it puts a good emphasis on pupils acting as historical enquirers, on finding things out for themselves through primary and secondary sources of evidence and through the examination of artefacts. Here teaching gets pupils to examine why things happened in history as they did rather than simply acquiring a list of facts. Pupils really enjoy this work and are highly motivated and keep on task for long periods of time which impacts well on how they learn and achieve. Pupils' learning is also enhanced through a good range of visits to places of historical interest and through visitors to the school which deepen pupils' understanding as well as being great fun. Good links are often made with developing pupils' literacy skills through research tasks and through writing up accounts in their own words although on other occasions opportunities are missed. Just occasionally expectations regarding how much work pupils are to complete and its presentation are not high enough.
67. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and monitors the quality of teaching through scrutiny of teachers' planning and some work scrutiny. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and there is good evidence of work being collated and levelled to act as a portfolio to assist staff in the accurate assessment of pupils' work.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

68. Due to timetable and time constraints, little of the work of the school in these areas was seen. Consequently no overall judgements on the quality of provision could be made on subjects except in art and design. However, aspects of other subjects were observed and the following represents the inspection findings.

### **Art and Design**

The provision in art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Specialist teaching by the co-ordinator is of a good standard.
- Pupils are provided with a vibrant range of artistic learning experiences.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

69. Standards in art and design are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Much of this is due to the specialist teaching provided by the subject co-ordinator. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because of the rise in standards and the quality of the teaching and learning.
70. Standards are good because artistic skills are taught well, across the school, and in a direct manner by the co-ordinator. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to work with a wide range of media in both two and three-dimensional format. Learning opportunities provided are exciting and capture the interest and imagination of all pupils who respond with great levels of enthusiasm and motivation. By the end of Year 2 pupils have developed good colour mixing techniques and use a range of different brushes and strokes to produce different effects. Throughout the school pupils' observational drawings are of a good standard and they produce good quality finished pieces of work in the style of different artists. By the time that pupils leave school many are good artists who are confident in working with a range of different media and carry out three-dimensional work successfully.
71. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils are taught techniques and skills such as colour mixing, brush techniques, printing, marbling and how different artists use different techniques. Pupils are then provided with opportunities to put these skills to good use. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. She encourages pupils to put their own marks of creativity and imagination into their work and so finished pieces are not uniform across the class.
72. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has produced a good quality skills based scheme of work and high quality portfolios of work. The fact that she teaches the subject across the school enables her to have a good grasp of standards and the progress that pupils are making. Class teachers often work alongside her so that their knowledge and expertise is being enhanced. The school is well resourced which adds to the quality of the learning experiences. The study of different artists from around the world enhances pupils' cultural development.

73. In **design and technology** evidence indicates that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning indicates that the subject is taught regularly. Planning evidence and discussions with pupils indicate that they are provided with satisfactory opportunities to design, make and evaluate a suitable range of different products. They are also directly taught sewing, cutting, joining and designing skills.
74. In **music** available evidence indicates that standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and that standards in singing are above average by the time that pupils leave school. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in singing activities and pupils do this with great gusto and enthusiasm. The older pupils in school sing particularly well and have a good sense of rhythm and clear diction. Opportunities are provided for pupils, throughout the school, to listen to different pieces of music and their knowledge and awareness of different composers is satisfactory. Less evidence was available of pupils composing music. In the limited lessons observed teaching was good. The teachers showed good subject knowledge which impacted most positively on the quality of learning and on pupils enjoyment. A good number of pupils benefit from lessons from peripatetic music teachers who provide fee-paying tuition for keyboard, wind and stringed instruments.
75. In **physical education** some good teaching for younger pupils was observed. Here the teacher was skilled and displayed good subject knowledge and expertise. As a result, pupils moved imaginatively and creatively as they travelled on, under and around the apparatus. Planning documents show that appropriate curriculum time and the breadth of work covered are in line with National Curriculum recommendations and by the time that pupils leave school all can swim at least 25 metres with many swimming beyond this distance. The school has addressed the shortcoming in resources identified in the previous inspection report and adequate resources are now in place to support the teaching of gymnastics.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

On the basis of what was observed, provision in this area of the curriculum is **satisfactory**.

76. A formal programme for developing pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship has only recently been implemented and has yet to be firmly established in the curriculum. However, pupils are provided with good opportunities to express their views and opinions in class and larger group discussions. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for tasks around the school and for their own learning. Health education issues are dealt with well in the science curriculum. Discussions with pupils indicate that this is a school where they feel very confident in making their views, feelings and opinions known and are equally confident that these views will be listened to, respected and acted upon where necessary. Discussions also show that a strong community spirit is evident in the school and pupils are well aware of the concept and importance of citizenship.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4);*

*unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*